

Marketing Seeds in the EU

"Seeds are a key input for competitive and sustainable agri-food systems in the EU."

Bringing the best seed to Europe's farmers



Reconciling sustainability with agricultural productivity in the face of climate change relies on resilient, high-yielding crops with superior nutritional value. Plant breeding contributes to high, more

stable yields, improved food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability through the development of ever better plant varieties and best quality seeds.



What is plant reproductive material?

51 000 Different varieties

of agricultural and vegetable species are available to EU farmers **today***

Plant Reproductive Material (PRM), such as seeds, cuttings, rootstock or tubers, is vital for food production. For 60 years, the EU PRM legislation has ensured fair competition for breeders, a true com-

4 000 New varieties

of agricultural and vegetable species come to the EU market **every year***

mon market for seed suppliers and seed users, and seed diversity and freedom of choice for farmers and growers with more than 51,000 registered varieties and 4,000 new ones annually.



Which are the main pillars of the legislation?

Identity: any new variety needs to be Distinct, Uniform, and Stable (DUS) over generations. This unique description embodies the specific characteristics of the individual variety, translating its genetics into the physical appearance (phenotype) in the field.

Performance: new varieties of agricultural crops are assessed for their Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU). Comparative trials establish that the new varieties perform better regarding yield, resistance to pests and diseases pressures, are adapted to defined climatic conditions

and deliver to their intended use (i.e. baking, malting, starch). This helps farmers to choose the most suitable variety for their specific conditions.

Quality: certification and adherence to high-quality standards ensure superior purity and germination rates, delivering the best quality while ensuring the absence of pests and diseases, in alignment with the EU's Plant Health Regulation. Together, identity, performance and quality of PRM continuously drive the sustainability of the EU's crop production.





The Role of Plant Breeding

66% of the productivity growth in EU agriculture relates to improved genetics, which is plant breeding.

Since the year 2000, advances in plant breeding are responsible for increasing productivity in arable farming by approximately 26%.

With this, plant breeding helped to avoid additional land use (saving more than 21.5 million hectares), greenhouse gas emissions due to such additional land use (4.0 billion tons of direct CO₂), and corresponding loss of biodiversity¹.

¹ See the QR code

Therefore, plant breeding has a proven track record of driving competitiveness and socio-economic and environmental sustainability in the European Union. Advancing sustainable agriculture and ensuring EU's competitiveness requires the full toolbox of innovative breeding methods, delivering high-quality seed of superior varieties.



What are Euroseeds' priorities on the Plant Reproductive Material proposal?

1. Maintain the pillars of the EU legislation (guaranteed identity, verified performance, assured quality and adherence to plant health rules) for all PRM. These are the cornerstones of Europe's successful plant breeding sector and for the confidence of farmers that all seed inputs contribute to competitive and sustainable crop production.

2. All professional PRM operators must adhere to the legislation. Common rules for a common market safeguard fair competition, transparency, and a level playing field between companies as well as uniform customer assurance.

3. Adapted rules for specific materials and markets must be made transparent to customers and appropriately controlled. Seed quality assurance and identifiable responsibility are required and rules and standards for absence of pests and diseases must be observed by all seed suppliers.

4. Professional operators should have the possibility to conduct performance trials and seed quality assessment at their own facilities, subject to a respective authorisation and under the official supervision of the responsible authorities. This would support the affordability and efficiency of the system, particularly for SMEs.



About our HFFA study
on plant breeding



Our website